



CAPTAIN GEORGE'S

Penny Dreadful

TORONTO, OCT. 17, 1980

NUMBER 608

3RD AND
FINAL WEEK
STARTS
MONDAY



*America's Foremost
Actor*
**JOHN
Barrymore**
from
the story IN "The SEA
MOBY BEAST"
DICK"
with DOLORES COSTELLO

Popular
Prices.

Jack Arthur
presents

1926

Regent

"IN AN OLD
FASHIONED
GARDEN"

HIPPODROME

Starts

Monday

A COMEDY ON THE MOVIES
WITH THE IRREPRESSIBLE

**COLLEEN
MOORE**
IN
**"Ella
Cinders"**

Colleen as a Kitchen Mechanic who
won a chance to act in the Movies.

BUY A **SCRIP BOOK** Convenient and Saves You Money
\$10.00K'85¢ — \$5.00K'45¢

**GLAMOROUS
GLORIA**

*In a gorgeous
Society Drama*

HIPPODROME

**GLORIA
SWANSON**

**"The
Untamed
Lady"**

Starts
Monday

Story by
FANNIE
HURST

Regent

Starts
Monday

One of the World's Best Beloved
Romances

Lavishly Produced
Superbly Presented.

**LA
BOHEME**

With a Cast of Tal-
ented Stars, including

JOHN GILBERT

of Merry Widow fame.

LILLIAN GISH

The Duse of the Screen.

DON HUTCHISON

Despite the 19 or more channels television viewers can pick up in this area, we lovers of old movies have been taking our lumps lately, what with the vast amount of made-for-television drek, the loss of Global's afternoon movie and CBLT's classic MGM package, and CITY's commitment to new films only.

Two new television series, one on PBS and one on Toronto's channel 47, have done much to lift the spirits of those of us who have a certain fondness for black-and-white memories. The PBS series is *MATINEE AT THE BIJOU* which runs on Buffalo's channel 17 on (what else?) Saturday afternoons. The 16-week package features B movies, a vintage serial (Junior G-Men), shorts, newsreels and trailers of the period.

Channel 47's innovative program is *THE ALL NIGHT SHOW*. For those of you who have not seen it, *THE ALL NIGHT SHOW* runs from 2 in the morning until 6 on weekdays and from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. on Saturdays. The format consists of the channel actually shutting down, with our national anthem grinding to a halt, followed by lights up in the master control room on Chuck, the night security guard. It appears that Chuck has taken over the technical facilities of the station. He spends the night chatting directly to the audience and to Ryerson Dupont, his unseen but garrulous cameraman.

Anyway, from time to time, Chuck pops various video tape cassettes into the console and what emerges is a potpourri of the damndest things imaginable, including 1950s commercials, vintage Paramount newsreels, Felix the Cat cartoons, Pete Smith Specialties, MGM's *Passing Parade* theatrical shorts, and old TV series like *Hollywood and The Stars*, *Burns and Allen*, *Outer Limits* and *Twilight Zone*. Many of the miscellaneous shorts are collectors gems which would never run on prime time television, making the program the best excuse for insomnia I know of. It's also a good reason to own a Betamax because you can always set the show on the timer and watch it over breakfast or whenever the mood takes you.

The nice thing about *THE ALL NIGHT SHOW* is that it's been packaged by a group of media and old movie fanatics who are extremely knowledgeable. Their enthusiasm for the material plus a fresh approach and off-the-wall humor make it a standout in what too often appears to be a canned wasteland.

Watch the show if you can. If you enjoy it as much as I do, I suggest that a phone call to the station (593-4747) or a letter to Channel 47, 545 Lake Shore Blvd. W., Toronto, would let management know there are people out here who really appreciate their nightly time machine.

CAPTAIN GEORGE'S PENNY DREADFUL, a weekly review established in 1968, is published by the Vast Whizzbang Organization at Memory Lane, 594 Markham Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

DON MILLER

SO SORRY: Why did 125 million viewers stay glued to their TV sets to watch 12 hours of *Shogun*, an adaptation of James Clavell's novel spread over five evenings? Two possible answers spring to mind. One is that everybody suddenly developed an insatiable desire to learn all about 17th century Japanese culture, including a cram course in the language, minus subtitling. The other is that because of a strike by the actors' union, there was nothing else on the other networks except reruns. Of course, the first is probably the real reason, since we're all such hounds for knowledge.

In any case, the Rising Sun certainly did rise here, aided greatly by a resounding exploitative campaign waged by NBC which even seeped into the nightly newscasts. And it wasn't many days before a native series about a samurai's adventures, suitably English-dubbed, was being offered as a follow-up to any takers (thus far, none).

To be objective about it, the project was produced in moderately good, albeit cautious style. It got off to an absorbing three-hour beginning which maintained a steady pace. The succeeding three episodes of two hours each were somewhat less successful, and the final three hours dovetailed the plot tangents in somewhat haphazard fashion -- one longed for a rousing mass combat sequence for a conclusion, or "rally" as Mack Sennett used to term it; the premise was there, but they copped out and brushed it off with narration and a dinky montage of extras marching around. Kind of makes you wonder -- if they spent 20 million dollars on it as advertised, then an extra million to film a battle wouldn't have strained the ledgers that much.

Anyway, the story's about this shipwrecked seaman who lands ashore in the middle of a land war between two factions, and if you think you've already seen it as a Western with Clint Eastwood, I wouldn't be a bit surprised. After all, old stony Clint got his big break in a spaghetti Western which in turn was made from a Japanese movie. Perhaps it won't be too long before we're actually seeing this one with a future incarnation of Eastwood. Or with Eastwood himself, if they hurry.

Other characters include the imposing boss man, played by Toshiro Mifune here and ideal for Barry Sullivan in the hoss-opera version. Mifune has played so many of these roles locally he seemed to be coasting, but he's such a good actor it sufficed. One of his gunslingers -- er, warriors, was played by Frankie Sakai, a lovely name, and familiar from some Japanese monster pics. His role is a natural for Ernest Borgnine. Some of the supporting English players weren't up to snuff but they weren't on all the time so it didn't hurt too much. The hero role fell to Richard Chamberlain, who obviously was aware of its limitations and wisely didn't try to push it too far. He's developed into a capable performer since the Dr. Kildare days, and appeared to advantage.

Fine outdoor scenery filmed in Japan, and enough action to prevent nodding off for the most part. But once it's moved from Japan to Old California...

PETE HARRIS

SPIRIT OF '80: A number of Golden Age comic book heroes survive today in a variety of permutations and variations on the originals -- Superman, Batman, Green Lantern, Hawkman and The Flash, among others -- but none endures in quite the same way as The Spirit, Will Eisner's creation.

The Spirit first appeared June 2, 1940, in a special 16-page comic book insert designed for Sunday newspapers. Black-and-white reprints of the first 10 Spirit stories were issued in 1972 and judging by those, it's obvious that Eisner was feeling his way toward the three-dimensional character The Spirit eventually became. For a relatively brief time in the early 1940s, The Spirit also starred in his own daily newspaper strip, but that format was too confining for a character whose adventures usually were introduced with splash pages that often evoked overtones of Salvador Dali. In the September, 1942, issue of Police Comics, The Spirit began an eight-year run as a companion feature to Jack Cole's immortal Plastic Man.

In 1944, Police Comics' publisher, Quality, launched a quarterly featuring six Spirit stories per issue. This ran until 1950, ending around the time that Police Comics dropped all its hero strips and changed its format. The Spirit Sunday inserts ended in 1952. From '52 to '54 Fiction House published five Spirit comic books featuring four stories per issue. And that, to all intents and purposes, was that for The Spirit.

For more than a decade, The Spirit was just a fond memory for a number of aging comic book fans who had gotten rid of their collections when they, mistakenly as it turned out, thought it was time to Grow Up and Leave Childhood Behind.

In 1966, The Spirit returned for a limited engagement in two issues published by Harvey, a company now best known for Casper and Richie Rich. In '72 came the aforementioned reprints of Spirit Sunday sections. Then, in 1974, Warren began publishing a magazine-sized Spirit series featuring black-and-white reprints of Eisner's strips from the 1940s and early 50s, plus, in issues 1 to 10, one story in full color. The Warren run lasted until issue No. 16, dated October, 1976. About a year later, in an issue dated Winter, 1977, Denis Kitchen's Kitchen Sink Enterprises picked up The Spirit in mid-stride, carrying on the format established by Warren and continuing the numbering. Now, The Spirit magazine has reached No. 25 and it looks better than ever, with color reproductions of early Spirit splash pages on the front and back covers. And, best of all, Will Eisner continues as editor-in-chief.

For information about subscriptions to The Spirit and back issues, you can usually pick up a copy of the magazine at the Silver Snail or Dragon Lady comic shops in Toronto, or you can write to Kitchen Sink Enterprises, Box 7, Princeton, Wisconsin 54968.